

Missouri Community Service Commission



AmeriCorps*State And Education Awards Program



2005 Application Instructions

For use with 2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines and AmeriCorps*State 2005 Application Instructions available on the internet at www.movolunteers.org or by mail or in electronic format by contacting the Missouri Community Service Commission at 573-751-7488, toll-free 1-877-210-7611, or by e-mail at americorps@ded.mo.gov.

The Missouri Community Service Commission is one of many Community Development programs offered through the Missouri Department of Economic Development, on the web at www.ded.mo.gov.



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Questions? Contact:

Missouri Community Service Commission

P.O. Box 118, HST 770
301 West High Street, Room 770
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 751-7488; fax (573) 526-0463
Toll-free 1-877-210-7611
www.movolunteers.org
americorps@ded.mo.gov

WHO SHOULD USE THESE GUIDELINES

These instructions are intended for use only by organizations requesting to develop an AmeriCorps*State or Education Awards project that will operate solely within the state of Missouri. Eligible applicants include Missouri educational institutions, 501(c)3 non-profit organizations registered with the Secretary of State of Missouri, and state and local government agencies. Organizations requesting to operate a project in more than one state should apply directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service as an AmeriCorps*National program. For more information, visit the Corporation's website at www.nationalservice.org.

In Missouri, the AmeriCorps*State program provides federal funds of up to \$12,400 per full-time equivalent (FTE) AmeriCorps Member and requires a minimum non-federal cash match of approximately \$2,000 per FTE. In addition, the applicant organization must provide at least 33% of all operating costs from local cash or other in-kind sources. See *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*, page 30 for additional information on match requirements.

The Education Awards Program provides just \$400 per FTE to assist with project operating costs. This program is well suited to higher education institutions using work-study funds to provide compensation for AmeriCorps Members, or to programs with local resources available to meet the living expenses of participants. See page 47 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines* for more information on the Education Award Program.

Both the AmeriCorps*State and Education Awards Programs provide an education award equivalent to \$4,725 for full-time (1700 hours) service. See *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*, page 34 for more information on sizes and requirements for the education award.

Missouri organizations and agencies interested in developing an AmeriCorps*VISTA or Senior Corps project should contact the Corporation for National and Community Service Missouri State Office at 816-374-6300, or via email at mo@cns.gov.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

The guidance and instructions contained in this document are in addition to the 2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines and AmeriCorps*State 2005 Application Instructions. **These documents are essential in developing your AmeriCorps application** and are available for download from the Commission's website at www.movolunteers.org or by mail or in electronic format by contacting the Missouri Community Service Commission in person, by telephone, mail, fax or e-mail at:

**P.O. Box 118
301 West High Street, Room 770
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 751-7488; fax (573) 526-0462
Toll-free 1-877-210-7611
americorps@ded.mo.gov**

The length and detail of these documents may seem overwhelming, especially to those organizations with no previous AmeriCorps or National Service experience. Commission staff is available to provide assistance in interpreting these guidelines and instructions as they apply to

your specific AmeriCorps project. We strongly encourage all applicants and interested parties to work closely with Commission staff in developing the application and designing their AmeriCorps project.

APPLICATION TYPES

As stated in the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*, organizations applying to operate a program within a single state (with the exception of Tribal organizations) must comply with requirements and deadlines set by that state's commission on national and community service. The Missouri Community Service Commission (Commission) has designed this document to provide those specific instructions and deadlines to applicants proposing to operate an AmeriCorps project in Missouri.

Notice to New Applicants

To assist new applicants in developing an application and designing an AmeriCorps project, the Commission encourages participation in our 'Concept Paper' process. Through this process, applicants provide a concise summary of the proposed project and receive detailed feedback from the Commission's review committee prior to development of a full application for AmeriCorps funds. 2005 Concept Paper Guidelines and Application are available on our website at www.movolunteers.org. Printed and electronic copies are available upon request.

AmeriCorps*State Competitive Application Process

Eligibility for consideration in this *nationally competitive process* is determined solely by the Missouri Community Service Commission and is offered on a by invitation only basis. Applications under this deadline compete for funding against hundreds of projects identified across the country as the "best of the best". Organizations invited to submit an application in this competition have proven track records in administering an AmeriCorps project and have demonstrated leadership ability both in developing AmeriCorps Members and in their support for National Service programs across Missouri.

AmeriCorps*State Formula Application Process

Each state commission is allocated funds using a population-based formula to fund AmeriCorps projects in their state. For 2005, the Missouri allocation has not been determined the Corporation, but is expected to fund 10 to 15 AmeriCorps projects. The maximum amount that a program may request (as set by the Commission) is **\$200,000** for 2005. This amount allows for a maximum request of **16 AmeriCorps Members**. Applications under this application process compete for funding against projects, both existing and new, across Missouri. The Missouri Community Service Commission selects programs for funding based on the scores and recommendations of the Commission's review committee.

Planning Grants: For 2005, the Commission will also consider funding no more than two Planning Grants of up to \$15,000 each to build the capacity of an organization or community to design and administer an AmeriCorps*State Formula project to begin in the fall of 2006.

Planning Grants will be available ONLY for applicants serving the Commission's 2005 Regional Funding priority areas (noted on page 10 of this document). Additional Planning Grant requirements include a 50% cash or in-kind match, development of a community volunteer center, and participation in at least quarterly Commission-sponsored meetings and events. For more information, review the *2005 Planning Grant Application Instructions* available on the Internet at www.movolunteers.org or by mail or in electronic format by contacting the Missouri Community Service Commission at 573-751-7488, toll-free 1-877-210-7611, or by e-mail at americorps@ded.mo.gov.

Education Award Program Application Process

The Education Award Program is a *nationally competitive* AmeriCorps program. The Commission's role in this process is to refine and recommend appropriate applications for funding by the Corporation for National and Community Service. After undergoing review by the Commission, successful applications under this category will compete with dozens of applications from across the nation that have received the recommendation of their state commission. New applicants and current sub-grantees in the final year of the three-year grant cycle must submit a "new" application as described in the *Education Awards Program 2005 Application Instructions*, pp. 4-14. Projects in the first or second year of the grant cycle are required to follow the *Continuation Instructions*, which are not available at this time. *AmeriCorps Education Awards Program 2005 Application Instructions* are available for download from the Corporation's website at <http://www.americorps.org/docs/2005guidelines/2005EAPApplicationInstructions%20FINAL2.doc> or by contacting Commission staff at the Missouri Community Service Commission.

e-GRANTS

Access to the Internet and ability to communicate effectively through various web-based applications and e-mail are required for all AmeriCorps projects. In 2003, the Corporation for National and Community Service introduced a new grants management system, called eGrants. In order to receive funding, applicant organizations will be required to create an account and enter their grant application(s) electronically in this system. This web-based system can be accessed through the Corporation's website at www.nationalservice.org. Instructions for completing your application in eGrants are included in the *AmeriCorps*State 2005 Application Instructions*; and additional assistance is available via the above website.

However, ONLY PAPER APPLICATIONS will be accepted by the Commission to satisfy application deadlines for evaluation by the review committee. All applications selected or recommended for funding will be required to enter their approved application in eGrants. To facilitate this process, Commission staff will provide technical assistance in Jefferson City on **May 24** for applicants receiving formula funding. Applicants should plan to enter their application on this date. Details on facility and directions will accompany award notifications.

APPLICATION DEADLINES AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All applications must comply with deadlines, format limitations and applicable narrative and budget instructions to be considered for funding. Specific character limits are clearly stated in the application instructions. The application must comply with the following requirements:

- You must submit one, single-sided, un-bound **original and twelve (12) copies** of the complete application. (Facsimiles or email versions of your application will not be accepted.)
- Type and **double-space** the application in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins. (For easy comparison, this document was prepared using the specified font and margins.)
- Number the narrative pages.
- Organize the application in the sequence outlined in the applicable instructions.
- Include the Summary of Accomplishments and Outcomes if your organization receives or has received Corporation funding in the last three years.
- Submit financial statements or audits, and a recent evaluation of your program, if you have one. (These documents should be submitted with the original application to the Missouri Community Service Commission by the deadlines specified below.)
- Adhere to the character limits listed in the Narrative Section below and number the pages.
- Complete a Performance Measurement Worksheet for each of your performance measures following the instructions in Appendix F. Performance measures will be different based upon the longevity of the AmeriCorps program, the nature of the program and the performance indicators you use.

Deadlines

AmeriCorps*State *Competitive Applications*

- Must be submitted on paper and received in the offices of the Missouri Community Service Commission no later than **3:00 p.m., Friday, January 7, 2005**. The Corporation for National and Community Service expects to announce final funding decisions no later than June 10, 2005.

AmeriCorps*State *Formula and Education Award Program Concept Papers*

- Must be submitted on paper and received in the office of the Missouri Community Service Commission no later than **3:00 p.m., Friday, January 7, 2005**. Feedback from the Commission's review Committee will be provided on or around February 18, 2005.

AmeriCorps*State *Formula and Planning Grant Applications*

- Must be submitted on paper and received in the offices of the Missouri Community Service Commission no later than **3:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 20, 2005**. The Commission expects to announce final funding decisions no later than May 16, 2005.

Education Awards Program Applications

- Must be submitted on paper and received in the offices of the Missouri Community Service Commission no later than **3:00 p.m., Friday, January 7, 2005**. Grants will be entered into eGrants by February 25 with the help of Commission staff.

Paper applications, audits and/or financial statements, and evaluations, if applicable must be submitted to the Missouri Community Service Commission at:

If submitted via regular mail:

MO Community Service Commission
P.O. Box 118
301 West High Street, Room 770
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Submitted via hand, express or overnight delivery

MO Community Service Commission
301 West High Street, Room 770
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone (573) 751-7488

ISSUE AREAS AND KEY ELEMENTS

In meeting local community needs, AmeriCorps supports a wide variety of activities in the issue areas of education, environment, public safety, and other human needs. Homeland security was added as a fifth AmeriCorps issue area in 2003.

All AmeriCorps programs will be required to include the following elements in their program design and application:

- Performance Measures/Accountability – see pp. 27-29 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*
- Recruitment and Management of Volunteers; Programs are required to have at least one objective related to the recruitment and management of volunteers, and should include volunteer contributions in objective and activity descriptions. See pp. 20-21 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines* for more info.
- Support for Community Organizations (Secular and Faith-Based) – see pp. 21-23 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*.
- Citizenship – see p. 18 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*.
- Capacity Building and Sustainability – see pp. 24-25 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*.

MISSOURI-SPECIFIC PROGRAM AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Over the past 10 years, the Missouri Community Service Commission has developed a number of policies related and applicable to AmeriCorps*State, Education Award and Promise Fellows programs and Members. These policies were developed to increase the overall quality of AmeriCorps programs in Missouri, and to support and maintain the identity of AmeriCorps as an effective, high-quality program nationwide. In many cases, these policies exceed the minimum standards and requirements outlined in the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines* and *AmeriCorps*State 2005 Application Instructions*. All programs funded through the Missouri Community Service Commission are required to comply with the policies summarized below.

First Aid, CPR and Disaster Preparedness Objective(s)

More than three years before September 11, 2001, the Missouri Community Service Commission recognized the importance of increasing the number of Missourians with the training and knowledge necessary to survive and assist others in emergency situations. Each AmeriCorps program funded through the Missouri Community Service Commission is required to insure that 100% of AmeriCorps Members receive First Aid and CPR certification before the end of their term of service, and that at least 75% of Members also participate in some form of disaster preparedness training. This requirement should be reflected as an Outcome performance measure (see p. 27 and Appendix B, pp. 51-55 of the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*.)

AmeriCorps Identity Requirements

The *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines* issued by the Corporation for National and Community Service encourage, but do not require programs to identify themselves, their service sites or their Members as a part of the AmeriCorps National Service network. However, the Missouri Community Service Commission, with the overwhelming support of its current sub-grantees, will continue to require all AmeriCorps programs receiving funds through this Commission to consistently identify all Members, program materials and service sites with the AmeriCorps name and logo whenever and wherever appropriate. Monitoring of this will be conducted during routine site visits.

Participation in Regional and Statewide Events and Meetings

In January 2004, the Commission implemented a new Unified State Training Plan (USTP) that focuses on maximizing opportunities for staff and participants in all AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, Learn & Serve America and Senior Corps programs to collaborate and network both locally and statewide. The USTP is the Commission's plan for providing training and assistance to AmeriCorps and other National Service programs in Missouri. Events and meetings included in that plan are:

- *Mandatory Training for New program staff – July:* Staff of new programs and new staff in existing programs are required to attend this 2-3 day training session that covers the “3 R’s, an S and 2 T’s” – rules, regulations, reporting requirements, supervising Members, training and technical assistance.
- *Missouri AmeriCorps Program Directors meetings:* Held quarterly around the state, these meetings provide an opportunity for staff of AmeriCorps*State, Education Award and Promise Fellows programs to network and share best practices.
- *Missouri InterCorps Council:* This group is comprised of AmeriCorps and VISTA Members, Learn & Serve Coordinators and Senior Corps staff representing programs statewide. This group meets at least quarterly, usually in conjunction with a Program Directors meeting or statewide event. The mission of this group is to serve as a team, sharing information, experiences, and support between representatives of Missouri National Service programs and acting as a voice to improve community/partner relationships, overall program development, Member training, preparedness, and public relations.
- *Missouri Service Day – mid-March:* An annual event bringing together staff and participants from all National Service programs on the Capitol grounds. The focus of this event is on citizenship and advocacy. Visits to local legislators are encouraged.
- *Missouri Summer Service Training (MOSST) – June:* Formerly called “Life After AmeriCorps”, this training focuses on post-service opportunities and plans for AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps*VISTA Members. This is a one-day regional training event.
- *Show-Me Service Training –October:* Originally designed as a statewide AmeriCorps “Kick-Off” event, this conference will continue to evolve to be inclusive of all National Service programs. The annual conference attendees include Members, supervisors, directors, and staff. Training will be focused on areas of interest or timeliness to operate National Service programs in Missouri.

BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

Follow the Budget Instructions and Budget Analysis Checklist appendices provided in the appropriate Application Instructions. The following additional requirements apply to Missouri AmeriCorps*State Competitive and Formula applicants:

- *Administrative Costs:* (Section III) Applicants may choose to include an additional 5% of the overall federal share as a separate Administrative Cost line item.
- *Cost Per Member and Match Requirements:* Calculated by dividing the total federal funds requested by the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) AmeriCorps Members proposed. Applicants proposing to include halftime, quarter-time or minimum time Members who will not receive a living allowance should request less than the allowable \$12,400 per Member. Applicants proposing programs including Members who will receive federal work-study funds for all or any portion of their service hours must include all federal work-study funds in the cost per-Member calculation. Contact Commission staff for further information on how this requirement may affect your budget request.
- *Statewide Meetings and Training Events:* All AmeriCorps*State projects should include in their budget any funds necessary to provide transportation for Members and/or staff to statewide meetings and events as described herein. Lodging, meals and other training costs associated with these events will be provided by the Commission. The Commission will assist Education Awards Program and Planning Grant staff with this cost.
- *National Program Director's Conference and/or other National Conferences:* A minimum of \$1,000 per staff person who will attend this event should be budgeted. The Commission will assist Education Awards Program and Planning Grant staff with this cost.

REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

All applications submitted to the Missouri Community Service Commission undergo a staff review and risk assessment before being forwarded to the Commission's Program Committee for review, scoring and recommendations. Two to three individuals with knowledge and/or experience in the management and administration of community development programs are selected as peer reviewers and join the Program Committee in all review, scoring and recommendation processes and discussions. New applicants are encouraged to participate in our Concept Paper process (described on p. 4 of this document) and/ or have Commission staff review the full application before submitting an official application. Commission staff will review all applications received by April 1 and provide feedback by April 8.

In addition to the selection criteria stated in the *2005 AmeriCorps Guidelines*, p. 41-44, the Missouri Community Service Commission has identified the following *Missouri Funding Priorities* for 2005:

- **Regional** - While the Program Committee will review proposals from all areas of the state, preference for new programs will be given to areas of the state that are currently unserved or underserved including:

BOOTHEEL REGION- including counties of Carter, Ripley, Wayne, Stoddard, Scott, Butler, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Dunklin

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION- including counties of Wright, Texas, Shannon, Douglas, Ozark, Howell, and Oregon

ALL COUNTIES NORTH OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

• **In addition**, preference will be given to areas whose school districts have or are in danger of losing their accreditation.

For applicants that have received AmeriCorps funding in the past, the Commission will also consider past performance and compliance record.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Corporation for National and Community Service has contracted with many organizations to provide a vast network of resources available to AmeriCorps and other National Service programs. A few of those that may be of assistance to organizations developing an AmeriCorps application are listed below.

- Project STAR – www.projectstar.org for assistance with objectives and evaluation
- National Service Resource Center at ETR Associates – www.etr.org/nsrc for information-related technical assistance including downloadable documents
- EpiCenter – www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter – best practices information and sample documents for National Service programs
- NWREL/Learns – www.nwrel.org/learns provides resources for programs focusing on education

One of the best resources for applicants and new AmeriCorps programs continues to be the experience of successful AmeriCorps programs around the nation. For more information on existing AmeriCorps programs in Missouri, visit the Commission's website at www.movolunteers.org. Information on AmeriCorps programs in other states can be found on the web at www.americorps.org.